

HERITAGE COMMISSION

Draft Minutes

March 4, 2010

The Heritage Commission held its regular monthly meeting in the City Council Chambers at 37 Green Street, Concord, New Hampshire, on Thursday, March 4, 2010, at 4:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order and Seating of Alternates:

Chairperson Donovan called the meeting to order at 4:38 p.m.

Present at the meeting were Chairperson Donovan, Vice Chairperson Frederick Richards, and members James McConaha, Robert V. Johnson, II, Dr. Bryant Tolles, and Steve Shurtleff. City Planner Douglas Woodward and Administrative Specialist Donna Muir were also present. Absent from the meeting were Committee Members Carol Durgy Brooks, Marilyn Fraser, and Elizabeth Durfee Hengen.

Chairperson Donovan elevated the alternate members to full member status for the meeting.

2. Minutes of the February 4, 2010 meeting:

The Commission considered the minutes of the February 4, 2010, Heritage Commission meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Shurtleff to accept the minutes as presented, and Vice Chairperson Richards seconded the motion. Chairperson Donovan asked if there was any discussion regarding the minutes. The motion accepting the minutes of the February 4, 2010, meeting passed unanimously.

3. New Business:

NH DOT – Sewalls Falls Bridge:

Chairperson Donovan stated that the Heritage Commission provided recommendations to the NHDOT regarding the Sewalls Falls Bridge in 2006. The decision of NHDOT is to have the existing bridge made one-way and to build a new bridge which will also be one-way in the opposite direction. Mr. McConaha would like to urge the NHDOT to keep the Heritage Commission in the loop regarding design plans for the project. Vice Chairperson Richards suggested that a letter be sent to the NHDOT asking that lines of communication be kept open, and that the Heritage Commission is interested in seeing the plans as they develop. Mr. Shurtleff suggested that a copy of the letter be sent to Ed Roberge, the City's Engineer. Mr. Woodward will draft a letter for Chairperson Donovan's signature.

Mr. Johnson stated that the existing bridge needs to have new piers and hopes that the design will be appropriate.

Chairperson Donovan asked whether the City had received the necessary approvals for the project. Mr. Woodward indicated that the City will contribute 20% of the cost while the State will pay 80% and controls the

design. A preliminary design had been agreed upon a few years ago that the Commission had had a major influence upon.

4. Old Business:

Certified Local Government Grant:

Chairperson Donovan stated that from the request for proposals that were sent out regarding the Certified Local Government Grant, three responses had been received from Elizabeth Durfee Hengen, John Milner Associates, and Lisa Mausolf.

Vice Chairperson Richards recused himself from reviewing the proposals, as he has a conflict of interest in that he has been a sub-consultant to Ms. Hengen.

Chairperson Donovan stated that he, Dr. Tolles, and Mr. Woodward would be reviewing the proposals and would make a recommendation to the Commission within the next week or so, and seek the Commission's concurrence by email.

Vice Chairperson Richards asked whether there was a deadline imposed by the NH Division of Historic Resources. Mr. Woodward stated that the deadline was September 30, 2010; however, he has not yet heard from Deborah Gagne as to whether the Governor and Council approved the grants. Mr. Shurtleff suggested that Mr. Woodward contact Executive Councilor John Shea by email to see if approval was received from Governor and Council.

Zoning Review Process – Concord 20/20:

Chairperson Donovan reminded the Commission that at the February Heritage Commission meeting, Jeffrey Taylor, a consultant for Concord 20/20, spoke to the Commission regarding the Zoning Review Process he was facilitating. Mr. Woodward explained that there were two public meetings scheduled – Tuesday, March 23, 2010, at 7:00 p.m., and Saturday, March 27, 2010, at 9:00 a.m. Both meetings will be held in City Council Chambers. Mr. Woodward said that the two meetings were open to all committee and board members, as well as the general public. He stated that members of the Planning Board would be attending both meetings, as they felt it was important to hear all the comments and suggestions being made. Another meeting is planned for Tuesday, April 13, 2010, as a follow-up for all board and committee members. Mr. Woodward spoke with Mr. Taylor about rescheduling the April meeting, as many of the boards and committees wouldn't have had their regular April monthly meetings by the 13th of April and wouldn't have had time to discuss the information received at the two March meetings being hosted by Mr. Taylor. Mr. Woodward has not yet heard back from Mr. Taylor.

Chairperson Donovan asked how this process developed. Mr. Woodward stated that the Economic Development Advisory Council (EDAC) had been discussing potential zoning changes for approximately a year. He also noted that as a matter of course, the Planning Board had been working on items specified in the Master Plan 2030. Concord 20/20 had some funds available and spoke with the Mayor about using those funds to hire a facilitator to lead the process.

Mr. McConaha asked what information the City is looking for from process. Mr. Woodward said that the final report would provide a list of ideas for which there may be consensus for immediate change to the Land Use Regulations and another list of ideas around which there was no consensus.

Chairperson Donovan stated that he wasn't sure what the Heritage Commission would be able to add to these discussions. Mr. Woodward emphasized that although the Heritage Commission may not have any specific proposals, the Commission should be aware of what other groups may be advocating and the affect these items may have on the Heritage Commission and its projects.

Vice Chairperson Richards suggested that the Heritage Commission should be represented at both of the March meetings, and that he would be available to attend the Tuesday evening meeting. Mr. Johnson volunteered to attend the Saturday morning meeting, and Mr. Shurtleff stated that he would be attending both meetings, as a City Council member.

Concord School District Consolidation Plan:

Chairperson Donovan stated that he and Mr. McConaha attended a meeting which included the NH Department of Education Commissioner, Ed Murdo, a DOE staff member who is reviewing the waiver from the Concord School District, Paul Leather, a DOE staff member, and an attorney from the NH Attorney General's Office. Chairperson Donovan stated that he reiterated and expanded on the points that were made by the Heritage Commission in their letter to the Concord School Board. He believes that the Heritage Commission's concerns were heard and feels that the DOE is looking very carefully at the waivers. The DOE stated that they cannot take into consideration the historic conditions of the buildings when deciding whether to grant the waivers. They also understood that the original waivers were granted based on reconstruction of the school building, while the new waiver requests are for tearing down the historic schools and building new schools.

Mr. McConaha stated that he felt the DOE was interested in the Heritage Commission's concerns. The DOE has not made a decision yet, and has asked the Concord School Board for additional information.

Chairperson Donovan said that the waiver is necessary as the Kimball School property is less than three acres, and the minimum lot size allowed by DOE standards for five hundred students is ten acres. Chairperson Donovan suggested to DOE that there were ways to reuse the Kimball School building if the Concord School Board does not receive the requested waiver.

Chairperson Donovan stated that he isn't sure the general public understands how much the streetscape will change with the Kimball and Morrill School Building and seven additional houses being demolished.

Mr. Johnson asked whether the Heritage Commission had signs that could be posted on each of the school buildings and houses, showing what will be lost by the demolition. Mr. Shurtleff stated that there is nothing precluding the Heritage Commission from putting up notices.

5. *Miscellany:*

Heritage Commission Members:

Mr. Johnson asked whether Dr. Black had been approached to become a citizen member of the Heritage Commission. Chairperson Donovan stated that he had spoken with Dr. Black in the past, but has not followed up.

Chairperson Donovan asked Mr. Woodward what was the status of a representative from the Planning Board joining the Heritage Commission. Mr. Woodward explained that Gerry Blanchette had resigned from the Planning Board and that currently the Planning Board is short one member and one alternate. The Heritage Commission liaison was discussed at the last Planning Board meeting but there were no volunteers at that time. The Planning Board Chair is going to follow-up by seeking a candidate for the position.

Mr. Shurtleff stated that he spoke with Carol Foss of the Planning Board, but at this time her schedule doesn't allow her to become a part of the Heritage Commission.

Commemorative Signs:

Chairperson Donovan stated that he received a package from William Upton containing proposed wording for a sign commemorating James Langley. He will make sure the Heritage Commission members receive the information for the April Heritage Commission meeting.

Mr. Shurtleff said that he would like to see a plaque commemorating John Winant for all he has done for the state and country. Mr. McConaha stated that if the plaque was to be put on a state road, the state would pay for the plaque. He stated that the key to moving a project such as this along would be to have the text for the plaque done and have the back up documents available. Vice Chairperson Richards felt that no plaques commemorating Mr. Winant existed because of the way he died. Mr. McConaha suggested that someone who is passionate about John Winant and his politics should do the research and create a sample text block for the plaque. He felt that either a NHTI student in a research program or an Eagle Scout candidate could do the research for this project. Mr. McConaha stated that the NH Division of Historic Resources approves the plaques and the NH Department of Transportation orders the markers and installs them. They also have all of the state markers and their text online that can be used as examples.

There being no further business or discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Shurtleff and seconded by Vice Chairperson Richards to adjourn the meeting. The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 5:50 p.m.

A TRUE RECORD ATTEST:

Donna Muir
Administrative Specialist
Planning Division